

CCSS Argumentative Writing— Grades 9-12

Specific language pulled directly from the Common Core State Standards is highlighted in blue. A student-friendly/teacher-friendly interpretation of what that standard means is above/below the standard.

Reveal an important and debatable topic. Identify/Analyze the two sides. Then explain the side you think is “right.”

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

Give *many, different, rational* reasons that explain why your side is right.

Back up your reasons with multiple facts, details, and examples.

Explain *very specific* reasons for your side of the issue.

Acknowledge the other “side’s” relevant points, but make it clear what “side” you agree with.

Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

List your key points so that they fit together, connect to one another, and make sense to the reader.

Respectfully point out the strengths & weaknesses of BOTH “your” side and the “other” side. (Of course, ultimately have more/stronger reasons for “your” side.)

Reasons and examples are all “on point.”

Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level and concerns.

Imagine your audience has researched this topic, too. They know a lot about it. Treat them like experts.

Transition from one reason/idea to the next one.

Use words, phrases, & clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, & clarify the relationships between the claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

The transitions you use help the reader know how the different points/ideas are connected together:
Are they sequential? *First, Second, Third, etc.*
Do they build on one another? *Therefore, Consequently, Furthermore, etc.*
Are they contrasting? *However, Although, etc.*

Sound like an official expert— not a teenager.
Write to a general audience— not any one person.
Use the correct grammar and traditional conventions. Be as proper as possible.

Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

Write a single-sentence or multi-sentence ending.

Provide a concluding statement or section that follows form and supports the argument presented.

The ending should parallel “your side” and the argument you’ve been stating in the piece.